and *The Times* wished that it might have had a 'different setting', as, doubtless, did also Mr. Thomas.

The Tribunal's Report found that 'there was an unauthorised disclosure by Mr. Thomas to Sir Alfred Butt of information relating to the Budget, and that use was made, by Sir Alfred Butt, of that information for the purpose of his private gain.' Sir Alfred's and Mr. Thomas's resignation from the House of Commons followed, and then both disappeared from public life. Mr. Thomas made a fugitive reappearance as a director of the Crystal Palace; but when this elaborate edifice was largely destroyed by fire, his directorship presumably lapsed.

VII

Snowden, MacDonald and Mr. Thomas were only the National Government's trimmings, distasteful or ornamental according to personal predilections, but not necessary to its continued existence. They came and went, but it went on for ever; occasionally rearranging itself, but always the same; like a repertory company whose different plays create a momentary surprise, until the actors' familiar faces are recognised. Sir John Simon might be at the Foreign Office, at the Home Office, at the Treasury, but he was always Sir John Simon; whether Sir Samuel Hoare was handling India, collective security, the Navy, the I.R.A., or civil defence, his touch did not vary; Sir Thomas Inskip inspired the same confidence or derision as Attorney-General, Co-ordinator of Defence, Dominions Secretary or, when he had become Lord Caldecote, as Lord Chancellor. They bumped

along, encountering occasional obstacles in their way, removing or circumventing these; His Majesty's Government, and as far as could be seen, likely to remain so indefinitely. The replacement of Mr. Lansbury by Mr. Attlee did not appreciably add to these difficulties; the Opposition's onslaughts were easily withstood (though Mr. Churchill's not always so easily), and the bestowal on its leader of a stipend of £2,000 a year made him seem one of themselves.